

Connecticut Legislative Update – May 10, 2007

Here are some of the bills we are watching this year. The 2007 session is scheduled to end on June 6. So much to do—so little time. Make your views known to our area’s legislators. And please send thanks to those who voted for these bills.

Bill	Purpose	Status	Comments
Environment			
1432	Global Warming: Adopt state policies to reduce greenhouse gases & allow towns to levy a 0.5% conveyance tax (if they wish) on buyers to finance open space and other environmental projects.	Bill has moved through Environment and Govt Adm.& Elections Committees. Planning & Develop. Committee voted 14-5 for Jt. Fav. Referral on 5/2/07.	Bill supported by Sen. Roraback, Nature Conservancy, Rivers Alliance, Ct Fund for Environ, Clean Water Action, Sierra, Audubon and other groups. Bill puts 10% surcharge on sale of incandescent bulbs and lets DEP ban them after 2010, requires state to purchase only hybrid autos, exempts hybrids from auto property tax, exempts emission credits from business income tax. P&D amendment would require trucks purchased by the State to be fuel efficient. In P&D, Rep. Miner voted NAY.
7377	Green Bldgs: incentives to use energy efficient technology and to construct green buildings.	Env. Comm. voted 29-1 for Jt Fav referral on 3/23. Finance Com. voted 51-0 for Jt. Fav. referral on 4/10. Ed. Comm. Jt. Fav. Unanimous approval 5/8/07	Calls for LEED “Silver” certification for school construction, provides tax credits for energy-efficient private construction. Supported by CFE. In Environment Comm. Reps. Willis, Piscopo and Miner all voted Yea. However, bill was amended to EXCLUDE local schools from the 2% subsidy for meeting Silver LEED standard.
988	Prohibit Idling of Motor Vehicles: make anti-idling laws enforceable by moving DEP regulations into Motor Vehicle statutes.	Jt Favorable Reports from Environment 3/15 and Transportation 4/18 Committees.	Bill is supported by League of Women Voters (see Naomi Schiff Meyers’s testimony at http://www.lwvct.org/issues/action/0207-dirty-diesel-emissions.htm .) Support also from DEP, Ct Fund for Env, Sierra. Opposition from CT School bus industry.
7249	Recycling Electronic Devices: make producers set up recycling programs.	Environ. Comm. voted Jt. Fav. referral 26-4 on 3/21. Finance voted Jt. Fav. referral 41-12 on 4/17. Gov’t Adm & Elect. Committee voted unanimously Jt. Favorable Referral, 5/9/07.	In Environ. Comm. Reps. Willis and Miner voted YEA. Piscopo voted NAY. In Finance Comm. Reps Piscopo and Ruwet vote NAY; Sen Roraback and Herlihy voted YEA.
1289	Bottle Bill: include water and other bottles in the deposit program.	Finance Comm voted out bill 35-15 on 4/10. Senate passed the bill 5/9/07 by 26-7. House Screening Committee referred the bill to General Law Committee which voted 4-13 on May 16 against referring it to the House.	Reps. Miner, Ruwet, Piscopo voted NAY. Sen. Roraback voted YEA. Full Senate vote: Roraback voted YEA, Herlihy and Deluca voted NAY. Efforts are underway to find an alternative vehicle.
5234	School lawn pesticides: ban these in schools grades K-8.	Environ. Committee voted 24-6 Jt. Favorable. Referral on 3/19. Education Comm voted 22-1 Jt. Fav. Referral on 4/18. Bill passed by Full House, 145-2 on 5/9/07.	In Ed. Committee, Rep. Ruwet voted YEA. In Environ. Comm, Rep. Willis voted YEA, Reps. Piscopo & Miner voted NAY. Rep. Ruwet of Torrington was one of the 2 NAY votes on House passage.
7343	Riparian Corridors: require 100 ft. undeveloped buffers to protect	Introduced by Environment Comm.	Corridors help keep water pure, provide wildlife corridors. Bill calls for regulation of development in corridors, not prohibition.

	waterways.		
5238	Clean Water - funding for wastewater treatment projects.	Finance Comm. 4/17 unanimously voted out bill with \$110 million in general obligation bonds. Govt Fin & Admin unanimously voted for bill 4/25.	Rep. Miner, Ruwet, Roraback, Piscopo & Herlihy all voted Yea on 4/17.
5249	Require Environ. Impact Statement PRIOR to sale or conveyance of state property	No action yet.	Cheryl Dunson's testimony at http://www.lwvct.org/issues/action/031607-land-use.htm Background: Last year prime state acreage in Norwich was given away without environmental review, in contravention of state regs.
7275	Face of CT: 10-yr plan to increase funding for open space, farmland, historic preservation & land use planning.	Environ. Comm Jt Fav unanimous referral. Unanimous Jt. Fav. Voe in Appropriations Comm 4/19.	Roraback & Willis are cosponsors. Bill proposes \$88.5 million in Capital expenditures & \$13.3 million in additional Operating funds annually for 10 yrs.
1215	Smart Growth: strengthen development planning & regional cooperation, reduce reliance on property tax by increasing PILOTs and education payments.	Weakened bill was passed 36-17 by Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee on 4/17 Referred to Commerce Committee.	Finance vote: Yes: Roraback; No: Herlihy, Miner, Piscopo, Ruwet
Bud- get	Increased funding for DEP so agency can do its job.		